erosion with the BFIR as per the provisions of Sick Industries Companies (Special Provision) Act, 1985.

(b) Hindustan Lever Limited (HLL) has not asked for any relief and concession for revival of MFIL and has, instead, stated that, notwithstanding the erosion of networth, with the management and funding of HLL on their own, the Company (MFIL) will show a turnaround.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of reply to (a) and (b) above.

News-Item "Government short changed itself in Modern sale, says CAG"

14. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Government short changed itself in Modern sale, says CAG" in the Times of India dated 29th June, 2001 regarding Modern Food Industries Ltd.;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether CAG has suggested depreciated replacement cost would have been the most appropriate method to value plant and machinery which was not adopted by Government;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether plant and machinery of Modern Food Industries Ltd. was not valued at all; and

(f) whether the same machinery is still being run by Hindustan Lever Ltd.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The observations made in the preliminary report of CAG have been replied in detail by Government.

(c) to (f) The plant and machinery being used by Modern Food Industries (India) Ltd. (MFIL) was mostly of 60's and 70' vintage and is obsolete and therefore, assignment of any replacement value to

such plant and machinery would be imaginary rather than real. Therefore, the only option was to consider their book value of Rs. 8.64 crores and there was no need for getting the old vintage type machinery assessed by any valuer. Two points further corroborate the precarious position of MFIL (1) the then management (prior to disinvestment) had estimated the incremental investment of Rs. 80 crores on replacement of obsolete plant and machinery and (2) immediately after disinvestment the new management had to start pumping in funds, which on date amount to Rs. 29 crores (in addition to the Rs. 20 crore equity) towards modernization and capital expenditure, repairs of plant, equipment and buildings, replacing baking tins, product and market development, trade support and brand building, repayment of high interest loans, Government loans, payment to suppliers, interim relief to employees working capital requirements, VRS payments towards restructuring/reduction of fixed overhead costs and for meeting other operational expenditure.

Decline in sex ratio

15. DR. KARAN SINGH:

SHRI CM. IBRAHIM:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the sharp decline in the sex ratio in the 0—6 age group, as revealed by the latest census report 2001;

(b) if so, the comparative figures of male/female ratio for this age group as per 1991 and 2001 census;

(c) in which State it is below 800 females against 1000 males;

(d) whether it is mainly attributable to the rampant misuse of the pre-natal sex detection tests and the sperm processing systems available in laboratories; and

(e) if so, what effective and firm steps are contemplated to prevent misuse of these scientific methods?